



Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

October 7, 2011

Governor Susana Martinez  
State Capitol  
Fourth Floor  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Governor Martinez:

I am the Chief of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). I want to share with you information regarding an important upcoming event that the FCC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are planning that may impact residents within the State of New Mexico. We need your help in alerting appropriate government officials and residents within your state.

On November 9, 2011 at 2 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST), FEMA and the FCC will conduct the first ever, top-to-bottom nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). The EAS is a media communications-based alerting system that is designed to transmit emergency alerts and warnings to the public at the national, state and local levels. EAS Participants broadcast alerts and warnings regarding weather alerts, child abductions and other types of emergencies. EAS alerts are transmitted over radio and television broadcast stations, cable television and other media services. The purpose of the November 9<sup>th</sup> test is to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the system as a way to alert the public during nationwide emergencies.

Although local and state components of the EAS are tested on a weekly and monthly basis, there has never been an end-to-end nationwide test or a national activation of the system. We need to know that the system will work as intended should public safety officials ever need to send an alert or warning to a large region of the United States. Only a top-down, simultaneous test of all components of the EAS on a nationwide basis can do this.

On November 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM EST, FEMA will transmit the EAS code for national emergencies. The EAS code and alert will be rebroadcast by broadcast stations and other service providers until it has been distributed throughout the entire country and U.S. territories. FEMA and the FCC are taking a number of steps to prepare for this historic test. Both agencies are conducting meetings, webinars and other activities to educate government agencies about the test. In addition, the FCC has established a website dedicated to the November 9<sup>th</sup> test which can be found on PSHSB's website at [www.fcc.gov/psbs](http://www.fcc.gov/psbs). In addition, both agencies plan to work with EAS stakeholders to educate the public in advance of the test.

We would appreciate your help as we educate government officials and the public in advance of this test. Some actions you can take include informing government officials in your state about the November 9<sup>th</sup> test, working with EAS stakeholders to ensure that your state's EAS plan is up-to-date and working with us and FEMA to inform your residents in advance of the test, so that they know what to expect.

I look forward to working with you and your staff on this and other important issues in the future. For your convenience, I have enclosed additional information regarding the November 9<sup>th</sup> nationwide EAS test, including other recommended actions your state can take in advance of the test. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information you may need or to discuss this or other issues that may be of interest. I can be reached on my direct line at 202-418-3620 or [jamie.barnett@fcc.gov](mailto:jamie.barnett@fcc.gov). Questions about the upcoming nationwide EAS test can also be directed to Lisa M. Fowlkes, Deputy Chief, of the FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau at (202) 418-7452 or [lisa.fowlkes@fcc.gov](mailto:lisa.fowlkes@fcc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Arden Barnett, Jr.", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

James Arden Barnett, Jr.  
Rear Admiral USNR (Ret.)  
Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau

Cc: Michael Duvall, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management